

April 9, 2009

MEDIA, PA—On April 9, 2009, Congressman Joe Sestak (PA-07) and Pennsylvania Institute of Technology President John Strayer announced a program to provide full scholarships to P.I.T. for Veterans who have served in the military since September 11, 2001, and are residents of the 7th Congressional District. The Veterans Scholarship program was developed in response to the critical role education plays in the reintegration and future success of returning Veterans. The new initiative provides full scholarships to earn an associate's degree for as many qualified Veterans as can be accommodated by select programs at P.I.T. The deadline for applications is May 15 and awards for the 2009-2010 academic years will be announced on June 15.

The members of the scholarship committee are: Thomas Reed, former U.S. Marine Corps officer and Professor at Widener University School of Law; Marsha Four, Chairwoman of the Nation Women's Veterans Committee who served in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps during the Vietnam War; Shawn Diggory, former U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant and Veteran of Operation Desert Storm; Chris Young, former U.S. Army Ranger, cancer survivor, and founder of Ranger for a Cure; and Jack Dixon, a Veteran of Air Force Intelligence and Admissions Representative and the Veterans Affairs Liaison at the Pennsylvania Institute of Technology.

"We owe a debt to our warriors," said Congressman Sestak. "It is with tremendous pride that our Nation sends its sons and daughters to serve, and it should not only be with gratitude, but practical support and guidance, that we welcome them home. In my father's World War II generation, the GI Bill helped utilize the talents and capability of returning Veterans to spark an economic boom. We owe nothing less to the generation that has served in the wake of 9/11. That's why I'm proud to support this scholarship, as I have supported the 21st Century GI Bill, and why I have no higher priority than this Nation's Veterans."

To aid in his effort to support Veterans here in the 7th District and in Congress, Congressman Sestak is holding the Third Annual Veterans Summit in May at Ridley High School. Last year's Veterans Summit drew over 300 veterans and their families. The 7th Congressional District has 54,000 Veterans—from the World War II generation to those recently returning from the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq—and the Congressman's District Office has handled over 1,200 Veterans cases.

The Third Annual Veterans Summit will be held Monday, May 11, 2009, from 6-9pm at Ridley High School, in Folsom. To sign up for the Summit, please visit http://www.sestak.house.gov/upcoming_events.shtml

The Veterans Scholarship eligibility requirements:

Served in the military since 9/11/2001

Service may have begun prior to 9/11/2001

Does not have to have served in Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan) or Operation Iraqi Freedom

Can be Active, Reserve, or National Guard duty

Must have been honorably discharged or currently serving

Resident of the PA 7th Congressional District

Must be eligible to receive full Pell and PHEAA funding

Must meet P.I.T. entrance requirements

Enrolls in one of the following:

Architectural/Civil Engineering Technology

Computer and Communication Technology

Computer Software and Information Technology

Mechanical Engineering Technology

The Pennsylvania Institute of Technology is a private, two-year, not-for-profit college, accredited by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education. Located in Media, P.I.T. offers two-year associate degree programs in a variety of disciplines, a dual admission agreement with Drexel University for completion of a bachelor degree upon graduation from P.I.T., and transfer agreements to many colleges and universities.

Some of Congressman Sestak's recent efforts to support Veterans:

On March 30, 2009, Congressman Sestak supported, and the House passed, three import measures to aid Veterans:

H.R. 1513, the Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2009, co-sponsored by Congressman Sestak, would direct the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to increase the rates of basic compensation for disabled veterans and the rates of dependency and indemnity compensation to their survivors and dependents, along with other benefits, in order to keep pace with the rising cost-of-living. The adjustment would become effective December 1, 2009,

and would be equal to that provided on an annual basis to Social Security recipients.

H.R. 1377 would expand veteran eligibility for reimbursement by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for emergency treatment furnished in a non-Department facility, and for other purposes. This bill would expand veteran eligibility to require the VA to pay for emergency treatment for a non-service connected condition if a third-party is not responsible for paying for the full cost of care. The bill clarifies that the VA only pay the difference between the amounts paid by the third-party and the VA allowable amount, and is not responsible for copayments the veteran owes to the third party.

H.R. 1171, the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program Reauthorization Act of 2009, would reauthorize the Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program for fiscal years 2010 through 2014. The bill was amended to authorize an additional \$10 million to provide dedicated services for homeless women veterans and homeless veterans with children. Grants would be made available to provide job training, counseling, placement services, and child care services to expedite the reintegration of veterans into the labor force.

In the 110th Congress, Congressman Sestak helped override President Bush's veto of The GI Bill for the 21st Century. This bill covers the costs of a four-year college education for the brave men and women returning from the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan—on a par with the educational benefits available after World War II. This bill will give our returning troops the tools to succeed after military service, strengthen our economy in the face of increasing global competition, and make military service more attractive as we work to rebuild our military. We owe our veterans a future that is equal to the first-class service that they have given to our country.

The original GI bill sparked economic growth and expansion for a whole generation of Americans. It made a free college education available to more than 15 million war veterans after World War II. The original GI bill paid the full cost of tuition at any public or private college or university. By 1956, about 8 million World War II veterans had taken advantage of the GI bill education and training benefit, including some of our nation's greatest leaders. According to a congressional study, the original GI bill returned \$7 to the economy for every \$1 spent.

The GI Bill for the 21st Century will make America's veterans of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan part of a new American economic recovery. The United States has never erred when it has made sustained new investments in higher education and job training. Educated veterans have higher income levels, which increases our national prosperity.

Born and raised in Delaware County, former 3-star Admiral Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years and now serves as the Representative from the 7th District of Pennsylvania. He led a series of operational commands at sea, including Commander of an aircraft carrier battle group of 30 U.S. and allied ships with over 15,000 sailors and 100 aircraft that conducted operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. After 9/11, Joe was the first Director of "Deep Blue," the Navy's anti-terrorism unit that established strategic and operations policies for the "Global War on Terrorism." He served as President Clinton's Director for Defense Policy at the National Security Council in the White House, and holds a Ph.D. in Political Economy and Government from Harvard University. According to the office of the House Historian, Joe is the highest-ranking former military officer ever elected to the U.S. Congress.

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